

Week Our Centering Color	Weekly Themes	Weekly Exercise from <u>The I of the Storm.</u>
Week 1 ~ Red The Life Force	<i>The Search for Wholeness</i>	I choose to make my life mean what it means
Week 2~ Orange Intuition	<i>Making Friends with Conflict</i>	My belief someone is against me is my “enemy”.
Week 3 ~ Yellow Good Judgment	<i>Communion: No Judgment Is About You</i>	Experience communion with God in life, in others, and in you.
Week 4 ~ Green Strength	<i>Principle</i>	See it right, make it right
Week 5 ~ Blue Godliness	<i>Living On Purpose</i>	You are the Christ In your world
Week 6 ~ Purple Power	<i>Nonresistance</i>	Being the Connection to Purpose
Week 7 White Light	<i>The Power of Center</i>	Stand as a Peacemaker



The **I** of the
Storm
Embracing Conflict, Creating Peace

*A week by week
Spiritual Guidebook
for Small Group Homestudy*

Based on the Book
The I of The Storm
By Gary Simmons

new thought
unity
center



INTRODUCTION TO OUR 7 WEEK PROGRAM

The I of the Storm

Our 7-week series is a sacred journey into the unlimited possibilities that occur when we realize that no one is against us. We will embrace our wonderful Unity book, *The I of the Storm*, and we will go deeply into our personal experience of nonresistance and peacemaking. Each Sunday we will focus our week on tools and principle of peacemaking so that we might expand our abilities to be the voice and life of God expressing through us. You are invited to become aware of your wholeness by participating in this small group Homestudy. You are encouraged to live the life of God, right here, right now. You are called to deepen and expand your awareness of communion and nonresistance in your daily life experience.

Gary Simmons, author of *The I of the Storm*, leads us gently through all the parts of ourselves that have created the perception of conflict. Through this book, we can develop the understanding and the practices that will allow us to find the peace and calm in any storm. Conflict will become the sea of possibilities for intimacy and connection.

When we choose to make a commitment, whether to ourselves, to another, or to our church, we step closer to our ultimate commitment: an alliance with God, our Source. Just imagine the people in this spiritual community focusing all our attention and our sacred intentions on deepening our connection to God through nonresistance and peacemaking, gathering in small groups, and celebrating the spiritual center that is in each one of us!

You are invited to participate during the next seven weeks to:

- *Read **The I of the Storm** by Gary Simmons*
- *Repeat your weekly affirmations, post your affirmation card*
- *Participate in a weekly homestudy group*
- *Attend Sunday services and celebration*
- *Be open to opportunities to step into the I of the Storm*

Notes



The I of the Storm

Notes

WEEKLY THEMES

SEARCH FOR WHOLENESS

No One is Against You
A New Paradigm for Wholeness

FRIENDS WITH CONFLICT

The False Enemy
Making Friends with Conflict

COMMUNION

The Four Winds of Conflict;
Separation, Misperception, Competition, Defensiveness

PRINCIPLE

See it Right, not Make it Right
Principle Helps You See Through Misperception

LIVING ON PURPOSE

Purpose Is; You Are
Taking Complete Ownership of Your Purpose; to be the Christ of God.

NONRESISTANCE

The God Energy of Presence
Your Willingness to Be Present

THE POWER OF CENTER

Extending Your Energy
A Call To Make Peace

THE MAGIC OF GROUP GATHERINGS

The magical part of this spiritually enriching Homestudy program includes the deep sense of community, connection, and family that develops in our small groups. Each week we have the opportunity to share our individual insights and experiences from the previous week's readings and practices. As we explore the *The I of the Storm* together we will develop amazing friendships and spiritual connections that will radiate into our Center and into our communities.



WEEK ONE
Search for Wholeness

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION

- If you can imagine for a moment that, literally, no one is against you, what emotions arise? Does fear arise? Does joy arise? Are you anxious at the idea? From what part of you does this feeling come?
- Searching for wholeness in terms of what's missing or what completes us divides the outer world into good and bad. Even when imagining you were whole and complete from within, what would you still fear? How is that thing against you?
- Think of a behavior that you find unacceptable, and look for the belief system that supports that judgment. Can you find the experience or lesson that created that belief system?
- Which people in your life have you assumed the best when "filling in the gaps?" Which people in your life have you assumed the worst when "filling in the gaps?" Discuss why this is so. Try to step back and *observe* your thoughts on this.
- How many of your interpersonal challenges are linked to your feeling inferior or feeling superior? How does that relate to your sense of your worth? How does your sense of your worth change from experience to experience?
- When looking back on a time you avoided conflict, can you recall your sense of worth and how that determined your behavior?

For Week 7 You are invited to

- Read Ch. 10 & 11, *The I of the Storm* by Gary Simmons
- Journal on the questions at the end of each chapter (Aware-apy)
- Review the weekly discussion questions.
- Post your Affirmation card.
- Repeat your weekly affirmation daily.
- Commit to participating in a study Group.

QUOTES FROM OUR TEXT

“All centers have a single common property. They are never in conflict with any other center. Your center and my center can never oppose each other. This can be explained through the application of quantum theory. In quantum reality there is only one center. Every point in the universe can exhibit properties of the center. What this means is that your center and my center and the center of the universe are the same.”

WISDOM AND INSIGHTS

“When we find ourselves in conflict, the details of the conflict might not be real. Much of what we perceive is based on our past experiences, and the way those experiences felt at the time. Any current feelings of fear, hurt, and anger come from what we did not get at the time, the needs that were not met. We came to believe that when those needs were not met, someone or something was against us. When we are present, we accept and release those conditioned feelings so that we are no longer motivated by them. We suspend our belief in a false reality that was based on the past. Released from the limits of our past, infinite possibilities are now accessible.”
-Larry Watson

The Power of Center

My center is where there is perfect equilibrium and perfect harmony.
I become the avenue through which
God blesses this moment.
I, _____, am living from my center of Principle.



WEEK SEVEN
The Power of Center

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION

In our relationships, we can either be connected and extending our energy, or be separate and withdrawing our energy. When you withdraw your energy from the relationship, what direct effect does that have on the other person? Do they feel safe? Are they likely to be acting from their center?

What happens in relationship when we consciously extend our energy? What direct effect does that have on other people?

Your beliefs are simply strategies to protect or explain yourself. They are not who you really are. If this is true, who are you?

We are to ask ourselves “What does my center want to do in this situation?” How does this question allow you to discover authentic action?

In the midst of conflict, we can sense fear and insecurity welling up and dominating our attention. How do you “transcend” those fears and insecurities?

Simmons says that peacemaking “is dynamic neutrality in the face of competing tensions or mutually exclusive positions.” Yet it is neither passive or aggressive. Explore this paradox.

How do you create *dynamic* neutrality? What does that look like? What does that mean to you?

What connections can you see between being a Peacemaker and the Season For Nonviolence?

You are invited to participate during week 1:

- Read Ch. 1 & 2, *The I of the Storm* by Gary Simmons
- Journal on the questions at the end of each chapter (Aware-apy)
- Review the weekly discussion questions.
- Post your Affirmation card.
- Repeat your weekly affirmation daily.
- Commit to participating in a study Group.

QUOTES FROM OUR TEXT

The future can only be regarded as probabilities floating upon a sea of infinite possibilities.

Searching for wholeness in terms of what’s missing or what completes you creates a hypersensitivity to how life looks and feels.

Wholeness is not outside of you, nor is it separate from you. It is the essence of your true nature and spiritual identity.

I make my life mean what it means. The way *I* choose to relate to my experience is what *my* experience becomes.

WISDOM AND INSIGHTS

There is no greater misfortune/ than underestimating your enemy. Underestimating your enemy means thinking he is evil. Thus you destroy your three treasures/ and become an enemy yourself.

When two great forces oppose each other,
the victory will go/ to the one that knows how to yield. -Lao Tzu

My Search for Wholeness

I am a whole and perfect child of God, and no one is against me.
When in Spirit, I am not my experiences.
When in Spirit, I am always greater than my challenges.



WEEK TWO
Friends with Conflict

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION

- “The soul seeks to move one into those areas of life where full potential has yet to be discovered.” What was your first reaction to that statement?
- How do you endow your enemy with the capacity to be a source of good in your life?
- In the four steps How to Deal With the Enemy, the book outlines the kind and generous internal dialogue that you can use when dealing with an “enemy”. As you imagine using these steps with a particular enemy, how does it feel? Is it possible? What would it look like if you could do it easily?
- In remembering a conflict where you felt very defensive, what were the triggers to your defensiveness? What is the meaning that you give those triggers?
- Are you caught up in needing life to be a certain way in order to feel okay about yourself?
- What does “Authenticity” mean to you? (Pg 60) How does it feel when you are not authentic?
- From your own perspective, how does authenticity and self worth relate to each other? (pg 61)
- We often can script what we *would* have said after the conflict has passed. Why can't we think of those things when we are in conflict?

For Week 6 You are invited to

- Read Ch. 9, *The I of the Storm* by Gary Simmons
- Journal on the questions at the end of the chapter (Aware-apy)
- Review the weekly discussion questions.
- Post your Affirmation card.
- Repeat your weekly affirmation daily.
- Commit to participating in your study Group.

QUOTES FROM OUR TEXT

“Nonresistance is the *I* of the storm of defensiveness. It is the seat of wholeness and the contact point between heaven and earth—between the field of infinite possibilities and the needs of the particular situation.”

“Nonresistance and Communion are overlapping attributes in that being present to life without conditions means being connected to our experience—to whatever is happening in the moment without pushing it way, without any ifs, ands, or buts.”

“Being present to life means letting your center, your spiritual nature, move you instead of letting your fears or insecurities do it.”

Nonresistance

I am connected to my experience through nonresistance.
I am present to my experience.
I, _____, fulfill purpose as an expression of God.



WEEK SIX

Nonresistance

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION

- Nonresistance is required if you want to be present, to show up. What does “nonresistance” mean to you? (pg. 131)
- When we resist what is present in our lives, we create friction and chaos. What are some of the results of that friction and chaos? How does your resistance effect you?
- We desire to be right because it makes our ego feel safe. When you are being the conduit between the intention of God living through you, and your experience, does it feel safe to *not* be right?
- How does nonresistance become the *I* of the Storm, the calm and balanced center, of defensiveness?
- Explore the analogy of the electrical circuit and it’s components as a spiritual system for interacting with your experience. How do you relate to that circuit?

WISDOM AND INSIGHTS

“Being present to life also means being connected to your feelings, fears, and insecurities. Nonresistance includes accepting your feelings and conditioned reactions. If you push them away, they gain more power over you. Once they are accepted, you no longer are ruled by them, you no longer feel the need to act from them. In your nonresistance, you are able to let your center, your spiritual nature, move you. And in nonresistance, you are able to see your wisdom, your connection to God. Focusing on this connection allows you to act with authenticity from your Purpose.”

- Larry Watson

For Week 2 you are invited to:

- Read Ch. 3 & 4, *The I of the Storm* by Gary Simmons
- Journal on the questions at the end of the chapter (Aware-apy)
- Review the weekly discussion questions.
- Post your Affirmation card.
- Repeat your weekly affirmation daily.
- Commit to participating in your study Group.

QUOTES FROM OUR TEXT

“No one is against you. This person’s hatred is not about you. It’s about what’s missing in your relationship. Or it’s about what’s missing in this person’s attempt to find love and peace. Your purpose in this relationship is to find a greater sense of wholeness and worth and to be the avenue through which God’s love flows into the relationship.”

“If to “return to mountain” is synonymous with equanimity, peace, and harmony, the ancients believed that it could only be realized by becoming present to life, by embracing the “tigers” that crossed one’s path.”

“When you disagree but are willing to discover what is underlying the disagreement, you strengthen the relationship.”

WISDOM AND INSIGHTS

“Our blessing the enemy allows us to reclaim our power and dignity by accepting and loving that place inside ourselves where we are not connected to God, those parts that we would disown. By owning and accepting those parts in ourselves, we have blessed our enemy.”

-Larry Watson

Friends with Conflict

I am willing to see all “enemies”
as a source of good in my life.

I embrace resistance as a path to intimacy and trust.
As the expression of God, I, _____, am authentic.



WEEK THREE
Communion

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION

- “Separation was a way of avoiding the pain of being too close, too vulnerable, and too innocent.” This effect included separation from your sense of self worth.
- If you could feel absolutely safe, if there were no possible threats to you, how strong would be your sense of self worth? (pg. 82)
- Most of us have been taught that we have to win. How does winning reinforce one’s inferiority? (pg. 89)
- “You are not your feelings. You may experience fear, but the fear is not you – nor is it a part of you.” (pg. 94) Do you agree? How does this concept change your view of yourself?
- Your *objective* in relationship to life, with others, and with yourself is to experience communion with God in life, in others, and in you.
- In some situations or groups you feel comfortable and relaxed. In those situations, what is your sense of wholeness and worth? In some situations you feel more guarded and uneasy; what is your sense of wholeness and worth there? How easily will you become defensive? In which of these situations would you assume others have judgments about you? (pg. 101)
- “When we arrive at the edge of our capacity to make sense of or to define our experience, we are at the threshold of the kingdom of God, the realm of infinite possibilities.” What does this mean to you?

For Week 5 You are invited to

- Read Ch. 8, *The I of the Storm* by Gary Simmons
- Journal on the questions at the end of the chapter (Aware-apy)
- Review the weekly discussion questions.
- Post your Affirmation card.
- Repeat your weekly affirmation daily.
- Commit to participating in your study Group.

QUOTES FROM OUR TEXT

“Purpose is the *I* of the storm of competing values, goals, and needs. Purpose is the universe’s intention to be, through you, the presence of God. In Unity, we call Purpose the *Christ of God*, meaning the whole and complete expression of God. Your spiritual purpose is to be the Christ of God, the Christ of your world.”

“You are the life of God. You are the ‘vitality, energy, vim of God,’ to quote a popular song, in those moments when the clouds of doubt, negativity, stubbornness, and futility threaten to storm upon the innocence of a new day.”

WISDOM AND INSIGHTS

Men are born soft and supple;
dead, they are stiff and hard.
Plants are born tender and pliant;
dead, they are brittle and dry.

Thus whoever is stiff and inflexible
is a disciple of death.

Whoever is soft and yielding
is a disciple of life.

-Stephen Mitchell, *Tao te Ching*

Living On Purpose

I am the Christ of God, I am the way of God,

I am the Life of God.

I, _____, am the universe expressing as God.



WEEK FIVE
Living On Purpose

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION

- In our daily lives, our intentions determine results. When we lose sight of our intention in any endeavor, we lose focus and easily become distracted. “Purpose is the universe’s intention to be, through you, the presence of God.” What happens when we lose focus on this intention? How did it feel when you lived through this Purpose and intention in a particular situation?
- Even if you are not yet expressing it at His level, can you see that your *potential* as the Christ of God is the same as Jesus’? What is that potential? (pg. 118)
- What are some of the thoughts and feelings that keep you from seeing that “you are the Christ of God in this situation?” How does the situation change when you move your attention from those thoughts of chaos, to being the way of God and loving unconditionally, accepting people as they are?
- Can you be the way of God for yourself, loving yourself unconditionally, accepting yourself as you are? Think of an internal conflict that would benefit from loving yourself, and being the way of God for yourself. In looking at internal “flaws” and mistakes you saw in yourself, what if you could accept yourself as you are and fill yourself with the awareness that you are the life of God?

For Week 3 You are invited to

- Read Ch. 5 & 6, *The I of the Storm* by Gary Simmons
- Journal on the questions at the end of the chapter (Aware-apy)
- Review the weekly discussion questions.
- Post your Affirmation card.
- Repeat your weekly affirmation daily.
- Commit to participating in your study Group.

QUOTES FROM OUR TEXT

“Conflict in your life is evidence of not being fully present or authentic in a particular situation or relationship.”

“The *four winds* or conditions that support the storm are: *separation, misperception, competition, and defensiveness*. The pivotal component in the conflict equation is how you feel about yourself.”

“Separation supports conflict because separation keeps you from experiencing God in yourself, in others, and in life over-all.”

“The reason wholeness seems so elusive is that you base your sense of well-being and worth on what is happening or not happening to you.”

“*No judgment is about you*. It is about the person who is doing the judging. But when you react by making the other person wrong or by defending yourself, you make the judgment mean that it is about you, when it’s really not. It is about what is missing for the other person.”

Communion

What is happening to me is powerless to keep me from co-creating my highest good.

My intention is to experience communion with life, with others, and with myself.

I, _____, am in communion with God in all that I do.



WEEK FOUR
Principle

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION

- “*Principle* is the *I* in the storm of misperception.” Often we may have thought of the *I* as the ego, but Gary Simmons is putting a different perspective on the *I* by describing it as the nature of the universe, its order and intelligence, and as our source. (pg. 105) How would you describe the concept of *Principle* ?
- When you move from ego to *Principle* as your source of being, how does that change your view of the world?
- When *Principle* is forgotten, can you feel how your sense of self-worth determines your perceptions (or misperceptions)? How does your perception of an adversary point to your sense of self-worth?
- Can you truly see conflict as a road sign to opportunity for greater intimacy and cohesiveness?
- How does it feel to think that in any given moment an infinite number of possibilities are actually present? Is this believable for you?
- If you give power to your perceptions when you say, “This is it!”, does it really make you feel safe and okay? How long does that last?
- Judgment usually grabs our attention and triggers a conditioned response that is based on a lack of self worth. “But it is Principle that helps you redirect your attention and awareness to the underlying needs of the relationship.” It seems like the most automatic responses are the result of the most emotionally charged triggers. How do you connect with Principle in those situations?

For Week 4 You are invited to

- Read Ch. 7, *The I of the Storm* by Gary Simmons
- Journal on the questions at the end of the chapter (Aware-apy)
- Review the weekly discussion questions.
- Post your Affirmation card.
- Repeat your weekly affirmation daily.
- Commit to participating in your study Group.

QUOTES FROM OUR TEXT

“Principle is another way of describing the nature of the universe, its order and intelligence. It is another word for God.”

“When you look at something and say, “This is what *it* is,” you are pouring your creative energy (attention and awareness) into that specific perception. The moment your awareness locks on to one possibility, all other universes collapse. While in any given situation there may be many possibilities, innumerable paths, the instant you decree “This is it!” all others vanish.”

“Principle is the basis of seeing life as it really is, as God sees. It is the high watch—the viewpoint of omniscience. Principle is the way of God-life. Principle is the order of the universe, the way things are in God. Principle is the Truth, the Truth that stands the test of time—like the Truth that no one is against you.”

“In Principle, no one is against you; therefore, *what you are making the experience mean* is the true enemy.”

Principle

I live from the Truth Principle of God's presence
and God's love
I am the presence of God.
I, _____, am one with God and all life.